

Christ's Estimate of Himself.

INTRO. The extreme difficulty of determining just what Jesus did claim for himself.

1. Apparent contradictory statements-

Lk. 18:19 "Why call me good? No one is good, no one but God".

In this statement does Jesus deny that he is good? I do not think so. I see in the statement a confession on his part that he is a man just like any other man and that like any man he can make no claim to goodness in himself. It is only as he lives his life in God it is only as he evidences the goodness of God can he himself be good, and it is not his own goodness apart from God but only with God, in the doing of his will, in the living of his own life as God lives, in showing forth a character like that of God.

11:25-29

Matt. 23:27

Read

In these and other similar statements Christ claims that he is Son of God as no other is. Just what is involved in this claim to uniqueness? I see no claim on the part of Jesus that he himself is God. Jesus lays claim to a closeness of fellowship with God the Father and to a spiritual likeness to the Father which transcends the highest religious experience and attainments of his fellows. His consciousness of unique sonship is the consciousness of unique nearness to God, unique knowledge of God, unique love of God, unique obedience to the will of God, and unique mission to reveal the heart and mind of God.

"Son of God" in the O.T.

Job 38:7 "When the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

Refers to angelic beings.

Applies also to judges and rulers

Ps. 82 "Thou art gods, all sons of the Most High, yet, like mere men, you shall die."

Applies to the king.

2 Sam. 7:14 "I will be his father and he shall be my son."

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Applies to Israel

Hosea 11:1 "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt."

In the time of Jesus the terms, "Son of Man", "Aon of God" and "Messiah" in the popular conception meant that God was to send one who was to act in his stead as the Ruler of Israel who would restore Israel to power and subject all nations unto her. Jesus puts new meaning into these terms because of his unique relation to the Father, and becomes their fulfillment in a role far more wonderful and meaningful than that of popular conception, apocalyptic vision or prophetic forecast.

Both by the way Jesus speaks of his own relation to God and the relation of others to God, suggests that the term, "Son of God" is indicative of some specially close relationship ^{with} God. If God is Father of course in some sense all men are children of God. *But* Jesus makes plain that sonship to God means likeness to God in character.

"Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called sons of God."

"Love your enemies and pray for them that despitefully use you, that ye may be sons of your Father which is in heaven."

God created man as a self-determining being in order that He might, in free human fellowship, fulfil Himself.

Man is divine in essence, for he has his being in the self-limitation of God. God, being thus limited, is not wholly Himself until His self-limitation achieves its goal. And it achieves its goal only in Jesus. Only in Jesus is God wholly Himself. Jesus is human, is a man with a human nature the same as ours, but Jesus develops a knowledge of God and a consequent fellowship with God and obedience to Him that enabled God to express Himself fully in Christ. In this sense the words of Jesus have significant meaning—"I and my Father are one."

If prayer is a fellowship with God and an attempt to will the will of God, then Jesus is everything to us in our prayers. And not in our prayers only: when we want to be sure of God, to apprehend His presence, to know and do His will, when we want God's love to rule our hearts and to fulfil itself in our lives, we concentrate our hearts and minds upon Jesus.

There is kinship between our self-conscious
being and reality, between man & God.
God does not ~~desire~~ ^{our desires} that we should be
suppressed, but purified from self-bias (as in
the Golden Rule) and intensified into
a divinely imaginative, unselfish love.
Jesus' thought of God gives to man a conception
of reality that ~~enables~~ for the first time
in history makes the universe man's home.
"In him was life & the life was the light of
men."

all that others have been able to do to
set forth their conception of the ideal
man. Jesus became a man, his conception
of the ideal man - a true son of God who
knows God, fellowship with God, does the
will of God, and fulfils his himself
the purpose of God for him.

In Jesus, we know that God loves &
seeks the human, in him, we know
that Jesus is God & so we know that
God is good.